

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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E. O. 11652: N/ A, DECON 3/22/74

TAGS: VIS, PINT

SUBJ: GVN- PRG POLITICAL TALKS: PRESS CONFERENCE MARCH 22, 1973

1. (SUMMARY) GVN AND PRG PRESS SPOKESMAN HELD PRESS CONFERENCES AT HOTEL MAJESTIC AFTERNOON MARCH 22, FOLLOWING SECOND SESSION OF BIPARTITE POLITICAL TALKS. PRG SPOKESMAN SAU CONCENTRATED ON ALLGED GVN DENIAL OF DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES AND DENOUNCED GVN " ENCROACHMENTS" ON " LIBERATED" ZONES. DAN FOR GVN REGRETTEED PRG REFUSAL TO ENTER INTO SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION DURING PLENARY AND SAID THAT DAY' S ACTIVITIES WERE UNFORTUNATELY REMINISCENT OF PARIS MEETINGS ON VIET- NAM, AN OBSERVATION WIDELY SHARED BY JOURNALISTS. THIRD PLENARY WILL TAKE PLACE MARCH 26. (END SUMMARY)

2. PRG SPOKESMAN SAU BEGAN BY SUMMARIZING HIEU' S PLENARY PRESENTATION, NOTING URGENCY OF DISCUSSION OF DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES AND SERIOUSNESS OF GVN CEASE- FIRE VIOLATIONS. HE NEXT DISCUSSED TONG LE CHAM AND RACH BAP SITUATION AT LENGTH, ASSERTING THAT BASES ARE WITHIN PRG TERRITORY, HAD BEEN USED TO LAUNCH " ENCROACHMENT" OPERATIONS, AND HENCE PRG WAS FORCED TO " BOTTLE THEM UP."

3. AFTER DESCRIBING OTHER ALLEGED GVN VIOLATIONS OF CEASE- FIRE, SAU TURNED TO QUESTION OF " DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES," LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STATING THAT GVN APPARENTLY CONSIDERS ARTICLE 11 OF ACCORD A " DEAD LETTER," AND ASSERTING THAT GVN IS ENGAGED

IN WHOLESALE " RECLASSIFICATION" OF POLITICAL PRISONERS,
RELLOCATION OF POPULATION AND OTHER SIMILARLY CLEAR
VIOLATIONS OF ACCORD.

4. IN BRIEF QUESTION PERIOD, SAU TERMED GVN OFFENSIVE
ACTIONS " EXTREMELY DANGEROUS" WHILE ASSERGING THAT THEY
ARE DOOMED TO FAIL. HE REITERATED PRG VIEW THAT MANY MORE
URGENT MATTERS, CHIEF AMONG THEM BEING QUESTION OF
DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES, MUST BE ADDRESSED PRIOR TO DIS-
CUSSING DEMOBILIZATION OF FORCES.

5. GVN SPOKESMAN DAN REGRETTED THAT PRG STILL SEEMS TO PREFER
PROPAGANDA TO SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS, AND DECLARED THAT
TODAY' S ACTIVITIES BORE DEPRESSING RESEMBLANCE TO KLEBER
TALKS. HE NOTED THAT GVN DID NOT THAT GVN DID NOT HAVE PREPARED
SPEECH IN PLENARY, HOPING THAT SESSIONS WOULD INSTEAD BE
GIVEN OVER TO FREE DISCUSSION, AND WOULD HAVE PREFERRED
THAT NO PRESS CONFERENCES BE HELD. PRG, HOWEVER, WAS
UNABLE TO RESIST TEMPTATION TOWARD POLEMICS. DAN SAID THAT
IN HIS INITIAL REMARKS, VIEN AGAIN URGED LOGIC OF GVN
AGENDA PROPOSAL (TO DISCUSS ELECTIONS, NCNRC AND WITH-
DRAWAL/ DEMOBILIZATION OF FORCES). HE NOTED THAT PRG AGREED
ON VALIDITY OF FIRST TWO POINTS BUT REJECTED DISCUSSION OF NVA
TROOP PRESENCE. QUESTION OF NVA PRESENCE IN SVN IS OF
" EXTREME URGENCY" FOR GRN, SAID DAN, AND THIS, RATHER
THAN PRG COMPLAINTS RE " DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES," IS FUNDA-
MENTAL POINT AT ISSUE BETWEEN TWO SIDES.

6. ASKED TO COMMENT ON SAU' S STATEMENTS RE ACTION AT
TONG LE CHAM AND RACH BAP, DAN SAID BASES WERE HELD BY
MOBILE NVA FORCES. GVN INFORMED JMC AND ICCS OF SITUATION,
SAID DAN, BUT BECAUSE BOTH THOSE ORGANIZATIONS HAVE BEEN
RENDERED INEFFECTIVE BY COMMUNIST OBSTRUCTIONISM, GVN WAS
FORCED TO TAKE NECESSARY MEASURES, WHICH ARE FULLY JUSTIFIED.

7. IN ANSWER TO OTHER QUESTIONS, DAN SAID THAT GVN HAD
HOPED POLITICAL TALKS WOULD NOT BE BURDENED BY CHANGES
AND COUNTER- CHARGES OF CEASE- FIRE VIOLATIONS, ALTHOUGH
SUCH VIOLATIONS-- MOST SERIOUS BEING CONTINUING NVA
INFILTRATION-- ARE INDEED OBSTACLES TO POLITICAL SETTLE
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MENT . HE SAID GVN INTENDED TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO TEACH
AGREEMENT ON POLITICAL SOLUTION WITHIN TIME FRAME SET
FORTH IN ACCORD.
ISHAM

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